

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SSM-03 SAA-01
SES-02 HA-05 TRSE-00 OMB-01 ACDA-12 CIAE-00
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R 151514Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2617
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 18969

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PORG EG XF
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SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN CONCERN OVER UPCOMING ARAB LEAGUE
FONMINS' MEETING

REF: CAIRO 18770

1. EGYPTIANS, AT LEAST AT MFA LEVEL, REMAIN CONCERNED
OVER UPCOMING ARAB LEAGUE FONMINS' MEETING, WHICH IS

NOW SCHEDULED TO BE HELD SEPTEMBER 12 IN KHARTOUM. TAHSIN BASHIR, GOE AMBASSADOR TO ARAB LEAGUE, TOLD AMBASSADOR LAST EVENING THAT AN EFFORT IS STILL BEING MADE TO TRY SOMEHOW TO ABORT THE MEETING OR AT LEAST CHANGE THE VENUE. EGYPTIANS ARE CONCERNED THAT KHADDAM, WHO WILL BE IN THE CHAIR IF MEETING TAKES PLACE AT KHARTOUM, WILL USE IT TO FLAY SADAT'S PEACE INITIATIVE. COMING ON HEELS OF CAMP DAVID TRIPARTITE SUMMIT, THEY EXPECT THAT KHADDAM WILL DEMAND A REPORT AND THEREAFTER PROCEED TO DERIDE RESULTS. EGYPTIANS THEMSELVES ARE UNCERTAIN WHAT RESULTS OF CAMP DAVID MEETING WILL BE, HENCE THEY ARE NOT ANXIOUS TO EXPOSE THEMSELVES TO KHADDAM'S LIKELY PUBLIC SCORN.

2. FONMIN KAMEL HAS MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE WILL NOT ATTEND KHARTOUM MEETING ON GROUNDS THAT COMBINATION OF CAMP DAVID TALKS AND SADAT'S SUBSEQUENT SALZBURG LAYOVER WILL PREVENT HIM FROM DOING SO. IF MINSTATE BOUTROS GHALI IS DESIGNATED TO HEAD EGYPTIAN DELEGATION, BASHIR IS CONCERNED THAT GOE WILL BE CRITICIZED FOR DOWNGRADING MEETING.

3. KAMEL DISCUSSED SUBJECT WITH ARAB LEAGUE SYG MAHMOUD RIAD LAST WEEKEND IN ALEXANDRIA TO SOLICIT LATTER'S ASSISTANCE IN EITHER POSTPONING CONFERENCE, CHANGING VENUE BACK TO CAIRO, OR REDUCING IT TO AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL.

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DORIAL LEVEL. ACCORDING BASHIR, RIAD IS SYMPATHETIC AND HAS UNDERTAKEN TO SEE WHAT HE CAN DO. RIAD IS CURRENTLY VISITING SAUDI ARABIA, AFTER WHICH HE WILL PROCEED TO DAMASCUS, BAGHDAD, AMMAN, GULF STATES AND KUWAIT. RIAD APPARENTLY EXPRESSED SKEPTICISM THAT VENUE COULD BE CHANGED BACK TO CAIRO, BUT SAID HE WOULD ATTEMPT TO POSTPONE CONFERENCE FOR A MONTH OR TWO OR, ALTERNATIVELY, PROPOSE THAT IT MEET AT AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL. IF LATTER TAKES PLACE, BASHIR CLAIMS HE CAN REFUSE TO RESPOND TO ANY SYRIAN OR REJECTIONIST CRITICISM ABOUT SADAT PEACE INITIATIVE BY CONTENDING THAT ARAB LEAGUE AMBASSADORS ARE CHARGED WITH TECHNICAL RATHER THAN POLITICAL MATTERS. LATTER MUST BE LEFT TO FONMINS.

4. EVERYTHING DEPENDS, ACCORDING TO BASHIR, UPON SAUDI POSITION. IF SAUDIS AGREE EITHER TO POSTPONE MEETING OR TO REDUCE IT TO AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL, SYRIANS AND OTHERS WILL HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO GO ALONG. EGYPTIANS ARE ANXIOUSLY AWAITING RIAD'S REPORT.

5. BASHIR DEPLORED THE FACT THAT BOTH SADAT AND KAMEL HAVE THESE PAST FEW MONTHS BEEN SO PREOCCUPIED WITH THE

PEACE INITIATIVE THAT THEY HAVE PAID INADEQUATE ATTENTION
TO ARAB MATTERS. AS A RESULT, SYRIANS AND SUDANESE
MANAGED MANEUVER TO SHIFT SITE OF CONFERENCE FROM CAIRO
TO KHARTOUM. EGYPTIANS ARE ANNOYED AT NUMAYRI'S ROLE
IN THIS SWITCH. EILTS

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